



State of California
The Natural Resources Agency
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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| PROJECT TITLE | Chico Air Attack Base – Sierra Pacific Industries Retardant Jettison Areas | | |
| PROJECT LOCATION | Four project areas totaling 140 acres located across the mountainous region approximately 25 miles north and east of the city of Chico, CA. Portions of Sections 9 and 32, T21N, Section 1, T24N, R4E, and Section 34, T25N, R3E, MDBM. | COUNTY | Butte |
| LEAD AGENCY | California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) | | |
| CONTACT | Kenneth Kendrick, Forester II | | |
| ADDRESS | CAL FIRE Butte Unit 176 Nelson Ave, Oroville CA 95954 | PHONE | 530-872-6334 office 530-370-5107 cell |

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project involves occasional, infrequent jettison of excess fire retardant material from air tankers onto grass or other areas in remote portions of private land in the mountains north east of Chico, California. Air tankers dispatched to a reported fire from the Chico Air Attack Base (CAAB) are at times, while airborne, cancelled prior to dropping retardant. As not all air tankers are capable of landing with a full load of fire retardant, they must jettison a portion of the load to insure a safe landing. The actual area covered in any single drop will be $\frac{1}{4}$ of an acre or less. Four separate project areas may receive jettisoned retardant. All four of these parcels are located on lands owned by Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI) and each unit is approximately 35 acres in size. Use of these jettison sites is conducted under agreement and consent of the landowner who manages their lands under sustainable forestry. The jettison sites are located within areas of controlled public access. CAL FIRE uses a variety of fire suppression chemical to enhance its capability to control and suppress wildfires. CAL FIRE plans to continue such use, and use only the most environmentally benign chemicals including, but not limited to Phos-Chek D75-F and P100 retardants. The areas on which the excess retardant is jettisoned are either bare, rock ridges or ridges within clear-cut units a minimum of 500 feet away from classified (I, II, or III) watercourses. Retardant is never to be jettisoned into any drainage, creek or riparian area.

EXEMPTION STATUS

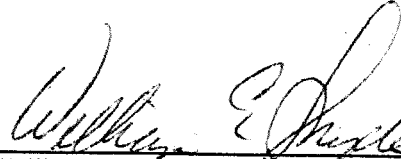
- ☒ **Categorical Exemption** Type/Section: Class 4 §15304 Minor Alterations to Land
Class 7 §15307 Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of Natural Resources
& Class 8 §15308 Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment
- ☐ **Statutory Exemption (state code section):**
- ☐ Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)
- ☐ Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
- ☐ Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))

REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT

This project fits within the definitions of the above-listed three Categorical Exemptions authorized in the CEQA Guidelines. Field review and office research conducted by CAL FIRE Resource Management staff confirmed that no exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. The Department has concluded that no significant environmental impact would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forestland/timberland, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, or to utilities and service systems. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at CAL FIRE Butte Unit, Resource Management, 176 Nelson Avenue, Oroville, California, CA 95954, Attn. Environmental Coordinator.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING




William E. Snyder, Deputy Director Date 6/29/11
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection